



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2019

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## Media availability ahead of busy Memorial Day weekend

**JOHNSTON, Iowa** – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department and Polk County Health Department will be available on Wednesday, May 22 at 10 a.m. at the Lakeview Boat Ramp, located off NW Beaver Drive to provide water safety tips for Iowans heading into the Memorial Day weekend.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, May 22, 2019

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** Lakeview Boat Ramp, located off NW Beaver Drive in Johnston

**WHO:** Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Polk County Health Department Subject matter experts will be available to answer questions related to the following items.

**Iowa DNR** *Susan Stocker, Boating Law Admin/Education Coordinator, Dustin Eighmy, DNR Conservation Officer and Dan Kendall, DNR Beach Monitoring Program*

- Avoiding alcohol while boating
- Effects of heat, sun exposure and reaction times
- Minimum age for children that have to wear a life jacket when the vessel is underway
- Life jacket demonstrations
- Age requirements for boat operation
- Boater education courses/certifications
- Boat accidents/reporting
- Unlawful operation
- Paddle sports and the awareness needed
- Beach water monitoring program and reporting/notification

**Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department** *Fire Chief Jim Clark and Lieutenant Tristan Johnson*

- Having a way to call for help in the event of an emergency
- Steps to take and provide emergency crews if someone goes under water
- Maintaining situational awareness while on the water
- Response capabilities and emergency response teams responding
- Importance of wearing of a life jacket at all times

**Polk County Health Department** *Nola Aigner, Health Educator/Public Information Officer*

- Drowning prevention (approximately 4,000 deaths each year, is a leading cause of injury death among children ages 1–4 years)
- Reducing Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs)
- Avoiding water that contains harmful algal blooms and health dangers

**Media Contact:** Alex Murphy, DNR Director of Communications,  
515.729.7533, [Alex.Murphy@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Alex.Murphy@dnr.iowa.gov).

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## Spring fishing in full swing across Iowa

Crappies and bluegills are biting in small ponds and lakes across Iowa. Spring panfish fishing is a great time to introduce beginners of all ages to fishing. Catching panfish is easy and fun.

“Late May and early June is a great time to take kids fishing,” said Joe Larscheid, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Bureau. “Fishing really heats up for easy-to-catch shore fish like bluegill and crappie.”

All Iowa lakes have panfish in them. Look for structures in the water, like rocks or a pile of brush or gravel, to find bluegills or crappies. Bass will be around brush or boat docks or rock piles. Quickly find fish structure locations with the interactive fishing atlas or download a catalog of 1,968 fishing structure locations for lakes across Iowa from the DNR’s fishing maps website at [www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing-Maps](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing-Maps).

“Panfish have small mouths, so keep your hooks, bobbers and bait small,” Larscheid said. “Use as light of tackle as you can. Four pound line, a bobber the size of a quarter and a size 8 hook work well.”

Make time to fish this spring and enjoy Iowa’s outdoors. Iowa waters teem with unprecedented numbers of fish, west to east from big river to big river, and the lakes, rivers and streams in-between. Find a list of 99 counties full of fish from the 2019 Iowa spring fishing forecast at [www.iowadnr.gov/fishing](http://www.iowadnr.gov/fishing).

“Remember the special memories you had fishing as a kid, and share this fun tradition with your kids and grandkids,” Larscheid said. Bring along snacks, take lots of photos

and celebrate each fish as if it was a record breaker.

**Media Contact:** Joe Larscheid, Chief of Fisheries, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-201-3376.

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## Hunters harvested nearly 11,400 turkeys during 2019 spring season



*Another year in the timber, another page in the scrapbook - Iowa's 2019 spring turkey season ended May 12. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.*

Turkey hunters reported harvesting nearly 11,400 Iowa birds this spring through the mandatory registration system, which is about 300 birds fewer than were harvested in 2018.

Iowa's spring turkey seasons began April 5 with the youth season and ended on May 12. Hunters purchased 47,400 spring turkey tags.

Iowans can help the DNR with its annual turkey production estimates by reporting all the turkeys seen during the months of July and August.

The DNR will have a link to the survey on its website before it begins on July 1, where Iowans can provide the date and county in which the turkey was seen, if it was an adult female or adult male (males have beards on their breast), and whether there are young poults (baby turkeys).

Annual production surveys conducted by the DNR are an important component of the species management plans, which includes providing hunting opportunities. Anyone seeing turkeys is encouraged to participate in this online survey.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Jim Coffey, Forest Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-774-2958.

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## Join in on the family fun of fishing during free fishing weekend

Iowa residents can try fishing without buying a license on June 7, 8 and 9 as part of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) free fishing weekend. All other regulations remain in place.

"Grab your family and your poles, hook a memory, and don't let go," said Joe Larscheid, chief of the Iowa DNR's Fisheries Bureau. "The memories are always bigger than the fish."

Free fishing weekend is a great time to take kids fishing or invite a neighbor or friend to come along. Outdoor fun awaits at hundreds of Iowa lakes, thousands of miles of rivers or a neighborhood pond. Find a list of stocked lakes and ponds that are easily accessible in parks and along trails on the Iowa DNR's interactive Iowa Community Fisheries Atlas at [www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fish-Local](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fish-Local).

Fun, hands-on fishing events will be offered across Iowa to help families new to fishing get started. Check the general fishing calendar on the DNR website at [www.iowadnr.gov/fishing](http://www.iowadnr.gov/fishing) for a list of free fishing events.

**Media Contact:** Joe Larscheid, Chief of Fisheries, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-201-3376.



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